

Bibliography - 1912

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Hon. George W. Ellis, K. C., F. R. G. S., with a Place in "Who's Who in America" and "Successful Americans," and a Member of Many Learned Societies, Contributes to a London Journal an Article on "Liberia in the Political Psychology of West Africa."

(By Cary B. Lewis.)

Mr. George W. Ellis is a prominent lawyer of Chicago with a suite of elegantly furnished rooms at 3000 South State street, and is doing a constantly increasing legal business in the state and federal courts of Illinois.

Situation of Liberia in West Africa.

In the October number of the Journal of the African Society, 1912, just out, appears a very interesting and illuminating contribution by Mr. Ellis upon "Liberia in the Political Psychology of West Africa." Opening with a graphic description of the main physical aspects of the great African continent, the writer first takes up and sets forth the European political machinery by means of which Europe controls the innumerable tribes of Africa. He tells about the cruelty of the early European colonial government toward the native races, in which the Africans were deprived of their lands and subjected to the indefinite domination of European administrators, little prepared for their new and grave responsibilities. He mentions the names of that growing body of African students and reformers, with their torments, Negro, is a comprehensive and fair reading and official world, historical estimate, and students are which finally secured a hearing for Africa reading it with avidity. Recently the and ultimately led to many needed reforms in colonial administration in West Africa in particular and in general throughout Africa.

Nature of the Article.

This article is eighteen pages long and written in the best literary form. It displays wide reading, an abundance of facts, and a striking familiarity with African problems and conditions. After discussing the mechanism of West African colonial government, early colonial attitude toward native races, reform in West African colonial government, the writer in the most comprehensive manner, considers the development of resources to neglect of native races, West African colonial attitude toward Americans, purpose and nature of the Liberian Democracy, Liberian attitude toward native races, difficulties of Liberian political ideal, European attitude towards Liberia, and the West African outlook. Interspersed with quotations the value of the article is enhanced by the list of authorities at the bottom of each page and marks the author as a scholar and writer of very careful training and liberal culture. Having resided in West Africa for a number of years since 1902 much of his information given is based upon observation and study, and thus strengthens the claim that he is an able student of African affairs and justly deserves his recognition as an authority on West African problems and conditions. For one to really appreciate the importance of this contribution he must read it for himself. The Journal which published it was so pleased with it that they also had printed a number of reprints in pamphlet form, one of which the reviewer has carefully perused.

Mr. Ellis as a Contributor.

This is not the only article which Mr. Ellis has contributed, in winning his place among American writers. In 1907 he contributed an article on "Education in Liberia" to the Bureau of Education at Washington, D. C., which is contained in

TWO NEW BOOKS.

the Bureau's report for 1907; on justice in the West African jungle he contributed another to The Independent, Christmas number, 1909, and another in the April 25th issue, 1911, on the "Negro in the Chicago Primary"; in May 1911, he contributed another to The American Political Science Review on "Political Institutions in Liberia"; in the January issue of the Journal of Race Development at Clark University, Worcester, Mass., is another on "Dynamic Factors in the Liberian Situation"; in October of the same magazine is another on "Islam as a Factor in West African Culture"; and in the July, 1912, issue is one on "Political Importance of the International Loan in Liberia."

Mr. Ellis the Recipient of Many Honors.

Mr. Ellis has received many honors for a young man. For special study and a thesis he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society of London; member of the African Society for the Study of African Institutions; Secretary of the American legation to the Republic of Liberia for nine and one-half years; member of the American Political Science Association; member of the American Sociological Society; member of the American Society of International Law; by request deposited fourteen cases of ethnological specimens in the National Museum, at Washington, D. C.; selected as one of the contributing editors of the Journal of African Institutions; selected as one of the main physical aspects of the great African continent, the writer first takes up and sets forth the European political machinery by means of which Europe controls the innumerable tribes of Africa. He tells about the cruelty of the early European colonial government toward the native races, in which the Africans were deprived of their lands and subjected to the indefinite domination of European administrators, little prepared for their new and grave responsibilities. He mentions the names of that growing body of African students and reformers, with their torments, Negro, is a comprehensive and fair reading and official world, historical estimate, and students are which finally secured a hearing for Africa reading it with avidity. Recently the and ultimately led to many needed reforms in colonial administration in West Africa in particular and in general throughout Africa.

We have read with profound interest the book of poems by S. A. Beadle, of Jackson, Miss., entitled "Lyrics of the Under World", and as an evidence of our appreciation of this volume, we reproduce the scholarly introduction by Hon. W. E. Mollison, which sets forth the merits of this volume in only such words and such graphic English as Mr. Mollison can command in his own inimitable way. We quote the following from Mr. Mollison's introduction:

Introduction.

It was Abraham Lincoln who said "God Almighty must have loved the common people, or he would not have made so many of them." It is not often that the bard makes any effort to sing the songs of the lowly. The poet is prone to pay court to the gods who dwell upon Olympus, rather than the delvers in mines or the fellers of the forest. The author of this book has seen life in all of its phases. From the humblest of beginnings, he has reached heights not dreamed of in his

boyhood; has measured swords with the best and master spirits of his age, and has held his own among them. His heart must beat in unison with the sufferings as well as the hopes and aspirations for

the first is a most unusual piece of work, such as are not "brother to the ox." Entitled "Man Before Adam," by Mr. A. T. Bell, of New York, an antiquarian and student of ethnological research of more than ordinary perseverance. This book will be illustrated and will contain many original coptic quotations, and will no doubt be most interesting to the general reader, as well as the professional ethnologist.

The other book is by our most distinguished scholar, President W. S. Scarborough, of Wilberforce University. It is a series of addresses, nine in number. The titles are (1) "The obligations to him for having opened Negro College," (2) "The College as a Source of Culture," (3) "The Col-

lege and the Student," (4) "The sings with such consummate grace and Training Worth While," (5) "What simple beauty. Counts for Success," (6) "Greek Learning and Human Liberty," (7) "What the Omen," (8) "Paul Laurence Dunbar," (9) "The Negro Graduate." These new vistas into the hearts and souls of the simple folk whose songs he

verses in earlier years, many of them show to the sustained height reached and kept

in "Lyrics of the Under World."

W. E. MOLLISON.

LYRICS IN THE UNDER World.

The little poem "Baby Darling" is reproduced on account of its naturalness to life and because of the wonderful pathos contained in its beautiful lines:

BABY DARLING

Once a wee bit baby darling,
Pure as beauty, sweet as grace,
Sat upon my knee and thrilled me
With her rare bewitching face;
Face so fair, so charmed, so pregnant
With the glow of buoyant soul,
That the angels paid her homage;
And, disputing earth's control,
Trooped about her crib and worshipped
Baby darling's virgin soul.

Lingered there and learned to love her,
And to envy us the child,
Till our jealousies grew frenzied.
As the spirit world beguiled,
Lured and charmed, and so enrapt her
With the ditties of the skies,
That she pined and looked the languor.
Through her fever-stricken eyes.
All our mortal love we gave her
But the angels:-paradise.

Yes, they took her, jealous angels,
Thus to take the baby child,
All because she was the fairest
That e'er looked on them and smiled
Up in glory where they keep her.
Can they, will they really be
Half as careful, half as anxious

Of our baby's weat as we!
Did they really give her fever.

In their joyous ecstacy?

Sick of pain, she daily wilted

Through a typhus fever's blight

Still her spirit dropped its body-

Far from earthly things took flight,

With the cherubim then journeyed,

Up in yon ethereal dome,

Purest, fairest being, truly,

That e'er through it flitted home

To Elysian fields of glory,

Where the Savior bids all come.

J. E. Bruce "Bruce-Grit," has published an interesting volume entitled: "Short Biographical Sketches of Eminent Negro Men and Women of Europe and the United States."

HENSON'S BOOK ON TRIP TO POLE

N.Y. Age 2-29-12

One of the most interesting of the spring's authors from many points of view is Matthew Henson, whose book, "A Negro Explorer at the North Pole," contains the only personal account other than Peary's that will ever be written of the climax of the expedition. It is significant, as Peary has said, that several races were represented on the day of the discovery.

"It is an interesting fact," he said, "that in the final conquest of the prize of the centuries' not alone individuals but races were represented. On that bitter brilliant day in April, 1909, when the Stars and Stripes floated at the north pole Caucasian, Ethiopian and Mongolian stood side by side at the apex of the earth in the harmonious companionship resulting from hard work, exposure, danger and a common object."

"Henson, son of the tropics, has proven through years his ability to stand tropical, temperate and the fiercest stress of frigid climate and exposure, while on the other hand, it is well known that the inhabitants of the highest north, and hardy as they are to the rigors of their own climate, succumb very quickly to the vagaries of even a temperate climate. Is it a difference in physical fibre or in brain and will power or is the difference in the climatic conditions themselves?"

Henson, the author, who throughout his book shows a love and knowledge of good books surprising when one considers his limited advantages and the restrictions imposed by his twenty years of hardships in exploration, does not in appearance show any evidence of extreme hardihood. Though virile enough to reach the pole with Peary, he is no huge Jack Johnson nor anything resembling him, but a smallish, quiet, observant sort of man. He is well knit, quick of movement and clear of eye—like a trained runner. He wears eyeglasses, carries himself like a competent though modest man of affairs and shows an efficiency and ease coming from long association with big men.

There were always a few books along on the exploring expeditions, and no one made better use of them than did Peary's Negro companion. He tells of the little library on board the Roosevelt during the last polar journey.

"out on the ice of the polar ocean," he says, "as far as reading matter went, I think Dr. Goodsell had a very small set of Shakespeare, and I know that I had a Holy Bible. The others who went out on the ice may have had reading matter with them, but they did not read it out loud, and so I am not in a position to say what their literary tastes were."

"But on board ship there was quite an extensive library, especially on Arctic and Antarctic topics, but as it was in the commander's cabin it was not heavily patronized. In my own cabin I had Dickens's 'Bleak House,' Kipling's 'Barrack Room Ballads,' and the poems of Thomas Hood; also a copy of the Holy Bible which had been given to me by a dear old lady in Brooklyn. I also had Peary's book, 'Northward Over the Great Ice,' and his last work, 'Nearest the Pole.'

"During the long dreary midnights of the Arctic winter I spent many a pleasant hour with my books. I also took along with me a calendar for the years 1908 and 1909, for in the regions of noonday darkness and midnight day-and-light, a calendar is absolutely necessary. But mostly I had rougher things than reading to do."

In his book the English used by this explorer's record is particularly interesting, for into it he weaves two of his favorite authors, Shakespeare and Kipling. The narrative is spirited and natural.

"And now my story is ended; it is a literature. It has been said that there is no better cultivator of a literary tale than Othello's occupation gone." I long to see them all again, the brave, cheery this man was as adaptable as he was adventurous. Shakespeare is there, too, beamingly unconsciously on the author's heart. For instance:

"We forced the dogs," he writes, clear ringing voice urging and encouraging me onward with his 'Well done,

and they took it on the run, the ice my boy.' I want to be with the party

when they reach the untried shores of China before he met Robert E. Peary,

when little wanton boys play Crocker Land. I yearn to be with those

untickly benders, often with serious results, on the newly formed ice on

sounds and brooks down in civilization to me the trail is calling.

"Our tickly benders were not done in the spirit of play, but on account of urgent necessity."

He died alone, he passed into the great unknown alone, bravely and honorably," he writes with Biblical simplicity and repetition of the death of Prof. Marvin. "He is the last of Earth's great martyrs; he is home, his work is done, he is where he longed to be, the Sailor is Home in the Sea. It is sad to write this. He went back to his death, drowned in the cold black water of the Big Lead. In unmarked, unmarbled grave, he sleeps his last, long sleep."

"Having no poetry in my soul," says in a description of northernmost Grant Land, "but being somewhat hardened by years of experience in the inhospitable country, words proper to give you an idea of its unique beauty do not come to mind."

"Imagine gorgeous bleakness, beautiful blankness. It never seems broad bright day, even in the middle of June, and the sky has the different effects of the varying hours of morning and evening twilight from the first to the last peep of day. Early in February, at noon, a thin band of light appears far to the southward, heralding the approach of the sun, and daily the twilight lengthens, until early in March, the sun, a flaming disk of fiery crimson, shows his distorted image above the horizon."

"The south sides of the lofty peaks have for days reflected the glory of the coming sun, and it does not require an artist to enjoy the unexampled splendor of the view. The snows covering the peaks show all of the colors.

variations and tones of the artist's palette and more. Artists have gone with me into the Arctic and I have heard them rave over the wondrous beauties of the scene and I have seen them at work trying to reproduce some of it with good results, but with nothing like the effect of the original. It is color

The courage and endurance of Mr. Henson, who has been a member of each and all of Admiral Peary's Arctic expeditions since 1891, deserve the utmost praise. Matthew Henson reflects credit on his race. It is marvelous how a "son of the tropics" should have been able to bear the severest cold, while some of the inhabitants of northern lands succumbed to the rigors of their own climate.

In Booker T. Washington's introduction we read these characteristic words: "I am proud and glad to welcome this account of his adventure from a man who has not only honored the race of which he is a member, but has proven again that courage, fidelity and ability are honored and rewarded under a black skin as well as under a white."

The narrative is spirited and natural. The naive statement of the author that for periods covering more than twelve months

he had been "to all intents an Eskimo, with Eskimos for companions, speaking their language, dressing in the same kind of clothes, living in the same kind of dens, eating the same food, enjoying their pleasures, and frequently sharing their griefs," must satisfy every appreciative reader that this man was as adaptable as he was adventurous.

Matthew Henson, who was born in Charles County, Maryland, on August 8, 1866, began life as a cabin boy on an ocean steamship and had made a voyage to China before he met Robert E. Peary.

He had been at times a blacksmith, a carpenter and a cook.

Charles County, Maryland, on August 8, 1866, began life as a cabin boy on an ocean steamship and had made a voyage to China before he met Robert E. Peary.

He had been at times a blacksmith, a carpenter and a cook.

He was eighteen when he met the Arctic explorer and he has been his companion for twenty-three years. During that time he acquired a knowledge of books and got a practical understanding of everything that is necessary part of daily life in the ice-bound wildernesses of polar exploration. He was at times a blacksmith, a carpenter and a cook.

He became thoroughly acquainted with the life, customs and language of the Eskimos. He himself built the ledges with which the journey to the pole was successfully completed. He

could not only drive a dog team or kill a musk ox, but was something of a navigator as well. He made himself not only the most trusted but also the most useful member of the expedition.

A Negro at the North Pole

"A Negro Explorer at the North Pole," By Matthew Henson. With a Foreword by Robert E. Peary and an introduction by Booker T. Washington. With illustrations from Photographs. New York: Frederick A. Stokes & Co.

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IT certainly is an inspiring book, one which ought to raise up many friends to the race and to encourage all who believe in equal opportunity before the law to see that those who toil so hard could get the just rewards of their justly directed industry.—OLD PENN (UNIVERSITY OF PA.) WEEKLY VIEW.

Send orders to the A. M. E. Book C

631 Pine St., Philadelphia

OR

CHARLES FRED WHITE

1508 Lombard St., Philadelphia

Bibliography - 1912

A STRANGE HUMAN DOCUMENT.

New York Age

Story of an "Ex-Colored Man"—*Another "a tall man with a small, dark mustache," who, as he was to learn later, was his father.* While still a little lad, he and his mother moved North by steamer, and, after landing in New York, went to a little town in Connecticut, also not named, which became his boyhood home. There they lived in a small cottage, while his mother took in sewing and he went to school, fully believing himself to be a white boy, and failing to understand the intensity of his mother's reproof when he came home and told of one of the "nigger" children at school. But the day of disillusionment came. One morning the principal of the school said, "You sit down for the present, and I will speak with the others." At first he did not understand and the light scarcely began to break in even when, after a certain element which may be termed school was dismissed and he went out in a kind of stupor, a few of the white children jeered at him, saying, "Oh, you're a nigger, too."

The narrative which is thus introduced is told clearly and vividly, although with a touch now and then of sentimental emotion, which is the less to be wondered at as the author describes his unusual musical achievements, which suggest plainly the temerarious racial inheritance. He was 1 years old or thereabouts at the time of his discovery of the Negro blood in his veins, and for some years after that he remained in the little Connecticut town, developing his musical talent, and once seeing his father, who came to visit the little cottage.

The solution of the title, "The Autobiography of an ex-Colored Man" is the one which must suggest itself to the curious reader, since there is only one. The author is the son of a white Southerner and a very light mulatto, and is himself so fair that after having been identified with Negroes in the South, and to a certain extent in the North, he has been able to withdraw himself wholly from relations with that race and, for the sake of the children borne him by his white wife, now dead, to class himself as a white man. So far as concerns the practical importance of the book, it is to be found chiefly in the warning account of the Negro underworld in the big city. As for the complete identification of this selected as "reader" in the cigar factory, a regular institution in all factories which employ Spanish-speaking workmen, the "reader" is perhaps by this time familiar through frequent description; he sits in the center of the room in which the cigarmakers work, and reads to them for a certain time each day the important news from the papers and whatever else he may consider interesting, sometimes selecting a novel and reading it in daily instalments.

Through his music teaching the author was born in a little town which he does not name, a class of colored people in Jacksonville, few years after the close of the civil war. Of his birthplace he recalls only the entrance "into the race." Not only does he write strongly of the upward struggle of the Negroes but in his account

of conditions in Jacksonville and in other cities, he gives an unusual picture of well-to-do, well-educated Negro society. As for the Negroes in the South he declares that they may be roughly divided into three classes, not so much in respect to themselves as in respect to their relations with the whites. The first class which he describes are the lowest, that from which the criminals chiefly come. It is a class which he declares to represent but a small proportion of the colored people, although unfortunately it often dominates public opinion concerning the whole race. "This class of blacks," he writes, "hate everything covered by a white skin and in regard they are loathed by the whites." The second class, as he divides them, comprises

the servants, the washwomen, the cooks, all in a word who are connected with the whites by domestic service, and between this class of the blacks and the whites he declares there to be little or no friction. His third class in which he tells of this work will prove one of exceptional interest to any

workmen and tradesmen and of the who have found an appeal in Negro

well-to-do and educated colored people.

and he adds that for a directly oppo-

site reason they are as far removed that he witnessed a lynching in which

from the whites as the members of the

first class. These people live in a hung but burned to death. Sick at

little world of their own and he points heart, he determined, as he frankly ex-

out that whereas the broadest of presses it, to forsake his race, "that I

Southern women could, with propriety, would change my name, raise a mus-

and undoubtedly would in fact, go to tache, and let the world take me for

the cabin of Aunt Mary, her cook, if what it would, that it was not neces-

Aunt Mary was sick and minister to sary for me to go about with a label

her comfort with her own hands, "if, of inferiority pasted across my fore-

on the other hand, Aunt Mary's daugh- head. All the while I understood that

ter who used to hang around the kitchen it was not discouragement, or fear, or

but who has received an education and search for a larger field of action and

unmarried a prosperous young colored opportunity that was driving me out of

man, were at death's door, the white Negro race, I knew that it was

woman would no more think of cross-shame, unbearable shame. Same at

the threshold of the daughter's cot-being identified with a people that

more than she would of going into a cold with impunity be treated worse

than animals. For certainly the law

From Jacksonville, on the closing of would restrain and punish the mali-

the cigar factory, the author drifted to the burning alive of animals"

New York, and the result is a descrip-

Returning to New York the author

of the Negro "underworld" of the finally succeeded in carving out a new

metropolis such as probably has never been written before. The young man without question as a white man, and

with a little money in his pocket was by dint of perseverance in taking a

taken about by Negro friends to various business training in a business school

various resorts, including a gambling club, and in working his way up has evi-

frequented by Negro "sports" and the lently acquired a remunerative posi-

like, together with white persons of ion in some commercial establishment,

certain sorts. Although vivid, the de-or reasons which are again obvious,

script is in no sense abhorrent, al- te is not specific in his description in

though a Zola might, indeed, have envy his part of his story. His music had

of it as the basis of a picture to be seen put aside as merely a diversion

filled out by the unrelenting addition nd as he frankly declares that he set

of details. As it is, the reader is in- himself to make money. After a time

introduced to clubs and restaurants in the circles of white society in which

where Negro jockeys flushed with their e moved without question as to his

winnings on the turf buy "wine" reck- ace, he met a girl whom he describes

lessly for all who sit around beneath ith sincere feeling, and after telling

the colored celebrities upon the wall er of his inheritance and living a

from Frederick Douglass to "Jack" summer of worn anxiety while she re-

Johnson and the like. From this gas-fired to the New England hills to think

light existence, as he well describes it,er problem out, they were married.

the author was rescued through his With the coming of their second child,

musical ability. In one of these resorts he had his first introduction to "rag" the opening, is living his life for his

time" music, which was then unknownchildren, yet at the close he speaks of

With his classical education in misidis position with complete frankness,

he was able to develop and adapt the "Sometimes," he writes, "it seems to

Negro melodies, and on the other hanme that I have been only a privileged

to play classical music in ragtime. I spectator of their inner life; at other

the end he became a "professor" at thtimes I feel that I have been a coward,

a piano in a Negro resort, and there waa deserter, and I am possessed by a

taken up by a white man of wealth an strange longing for my mother's peo-

leisure in search of novelty, who em ple. To this he adds a reference to a

ployed him to play at Bohemian dir meeting which he attended several

inners and finally took him abroad as years ago at Carnegie Hall in the in-

companion giving him opportunities terest of Hampton Institute. "The

France and Germany to pick up nHampton students sang the old songs

only the languages but more music and awoke memories that left me sad.

Among the speakers were R. C. Ogden, ex-Ambassador Choate, and Mark Twain, but the greatest interest of the audience was centered in Booker T. Washington, and not because he so much surpassed the others in eloquence, but because of what he represented with so much earnestness and faith. And it is this that all of that small but gallant band of colored men who are publicly fighting the cause of their race have behind them. Even those who oppose them know that these men have the eternal principles of right on their side, and they will be victors, even though they should go down in defeat. Beside them I feel small and selfish. I am an ordinarily successful man who has made a little money. They are men who are making history and a race. I, too, might have taken part in a work so glorious. My love for my children makes me glad that I am what I am, and keeps me glad that I am what I am, and keeps me from desiring to be otherwise; and yet, when I sometimes open a little box in which I still keep my angible remnants of a vanished dream, dead ambition, a sacrificed talent, I cannot repress the thought that, after have sold my birthright for a mess of pottage.—From The Springfield Republican.